

Good evening,

Co-chairs, ranking members, and members of the committee, my name is Julia Karpman and I am a second year dental student at the University of Connecticut School of Dental Medicine. I have been a Connecticut resident since the first grade, and have gone through the public school system all the way through elementary school, high school, UConn Storrs for my undergraduate degree, and am now working towards my doctorate at UConn Health. I only have good things to say about every institution that I have attended. Although all experiences have been superb, the highlight of my Connecticut education has been my time here at UConn Dental. Thanks to all of your support over the past many years which has provided essential funding to the program, our very own UConn Dental School has an incredible reputation as one of the best dental schools in the nation. We recently got a perfect score on accreditation, and also received the prestigious Gies Award for outstanding achievement. People come to our dental education programs (including the graduate dental program and post-graduate residency programs) from all over the country, seeking the kind of education that the dental community knows is top notch.

Although we have a good reputation now, we need to do all that we can to save it from deteriorating and stay on top. The renovations to the clinics that have been planned are absolutely crucial to be able to continue to recruit the top applicants to our school. I know of people in my interview group two years ago that decided against UConn because of the older and less up to date facilities that could not compare to Tufts or Columbia. Not only will it affect future matriculating classes but also current students who are choosing where to complete their residencies. If the facilities are not kept up to date and are not improved we will be losing many excellent students who make our school the wonderful place it is.

Additionally, the Urban Service Track (UST) program has given me the valuable experience of working with students of other disciplines that most dental students will never have. UST is one of the front-runners in interdisciplinary education, and is another reason why UCHC is so dear to me. UST has given me the opportunity to learn how to work with other health professionals in the fields of medicine, nursing, pharmacy, social work, and medicine which will improve my team work skills in the future as a clinician. Past graduates of UST have shared with me the positive impact the program has made on their careers as young professionals and I feel so lucky to have the opportunity to have that same edge once I graduate.

For the sake of the Connecticut graduate, medical, and dental schools to remain at the top of their fields it is of utmost importance the funding is not cut to these programs. UConn Health has proven the outstanding achievements they can accomplish with the aid of the governments funding, and deserves the ability to continue this impressive trend.

Regards,

Julia Karpman